

# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### New Orleans, Louisiana

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

August 2000

#### City of New Orleans Police Districts

Click on a specific crime link below or on the district map:



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## **New Orleans**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population: 496,938 (1990 census)
- Gender: 46.46% Male, 53.54% Female
- Age: 27.46% under 18 years, 13.01% 65 years or older
- Race/Ethnicity: 34.9% White, 61.9% Black, 0.5% American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut, 1.9% Asian or Pacific Islander, 1.1% Other, 3.5% Hispanic Origin
- Percent of population below poverty level: 31.6% (152,042)

### **Politics<sup>2</sup>**

- Mayor: Marc H. Morial
- Superintendent of Police: Richard J. Pennington
- City Council: Suzanne Haik Terrell, Oliver M. Thomas, Jr., Troy Carter, Roy E. Glapion, Jr., Ellen Hazeur-Distance
- Gulf Coast HIDTA Director: David Knight

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)<sup>3</sup>  
The Gulf Coast HIDTA was designated in 1996 and includes 12 counties/parishes in Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi. This HIDTA is responsible for coordinating law enforcement efforts to combat drug trafficking through the Gulf of Mexico and into the seaports and airports of the Gulf Coast area. This area serves as a gateway for drugs entering the U.S. through 7 deep-water ports and over 8,000 miles of largely unpatrolled coastlines and waterways. This HIDTA involves Federal, State and Local law enforcement agencies in all three states including the New Orleans Police Department and the New Orleans Harbor Police.
- Executive Office of Weed and Seed (EOWS)<sup>4</sup>  
The New Orleans Weed and Seed Program brings together the police and the community to help in suppressing drugs and crime in New Orleans neighborhoods. The Target Area for this program is the Lafitte public housing complex. Law enforcement strategies in this area focus on the suppression of street corner drug dealing and the arrest and prosecution of those responsible.

### **Crime and Drug-Related Crime**

- During 1997 there were 3,825 drug arrests in New Orleans. Of these, 504 involved youths between the age of 14 and 19 years old. The majority of the arrestees in 1997 were black males (2,779), followed by white males (480), black females (442), and white females (124).<sup>5</sup>

#### Drug Arrests in New Orleans, 1995-1997

Drug	1995	1996	1997
Opium or Cocaine	2,099	2,068	2,162
Marijuana	1,584	1,550	1,323
Synthetic Narcotics	1	2	1
Dangerous Non-Narcotic Drugs	394	378	339
Total	4,078	3,998	3,825

- The number of murders in New Orleans has declined from 230 in 1998 to 159 in 1999.<sup>6</sup>

#### Offenses Known to Police, New Orleans, 1997-98

Offense	1998	1999
Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter	230	159
Forcible Rape	299	280
Robbery	2,965	2,733
Aggravated Assault	3,394	2,760
Burglary	7,008	5,626
Larceny-Theft	18,645	17,086
Motor vehicle theft	8,270	7,118
Arson	293	221
Crime Index Total	40,811	35,762

- In 1999, 69.2% of the 913 adult male arrestees sampled, and 58.6% of the 374 adult female arrestees sampled in New Orleans tested positive for drugs at the time of their arrests.<sup>7</sup>

#### Percent Positive for Drugs, by Drug and Offense Type, New Orleans, 1999

Offense Type	Cocaine		Marijuana		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	31.7	17.0	38.2	17.0	60.2	32.1
Property	46.3	44.7	38.0	22.4	70.4	58.8
Drug	52.8	54.8	50.5	41.9	85.2	75.8
Sales	53.1	50.0	50.0	25.0	81.3	50.0
Possession	53.4	55.0	50.3	43.3	86.0	76.7
Prostitution	100.0	80.0	0.0	33.3	100.0	100.0
Other	40.3	37.2	36.4	20.7	63.1	54.3

#### Drugs<sup>8</sup>

- Cocaine/Crack

The New Orleans area continues to be plagued by the widespread availability of both cocaine hydrochloride (HCl) and crack cocaine.

- **Heroin**  
Heroin use is rising in the New Orleans area. A possible reason for this is that more crack users are using heroin to relieve the harsh effects of crack. Injection is the primary method of use. Despite this, inner-city younger users seem to prefer to snort the drug. According to the DEA, Colombian (yellow and white), Southeast Asian (white), and Mexican (mostly brown) heroin are available in the New Orleans area.
- **Marijuana**  
Marijuana use among youth in New Orleans is up, and marijuana use in general is high.
- **Methamphetamine**  
Methamphetamine availability has increased in the New Orleans area. Much of the methamphetamine comes from California or from Mexican organizations. These organizations are replacing motorcycle gangs as the dominant producers and are much more efficient. These groups also manufacture a greater quantity of high-purity methamphetamine.
- **Other Drugs**  
GHB, Rohypnol, and Ketamine use have increased in the New Orleans area. GHB is being obtained in Mexican border towns, smuggled into Texas, and shipped into New Orleans and southeast Louisiana via overnight mail. Rohypnol is most popular among white, upper-middle class high school and college students and is cheap at \$5-\$10 per tablet. Reports indicate increased availability of GHB in both liquid and powder forms. A cocktail known as "MAX," consisting of GHB mixed with amphetamine in an alcoholic drink, is very popular in New Orleans.

### **Juveniles<sup>9</sup>**

- A 1999 survey of New Orleans high school students showed that 38.1% of them tried marijuana at least once in their lifetimes.

Percent of New Orleans High School Students Using Drugs, 1999

<b>Drug Type and Use</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Lifetime Marijuana Use (1)	33.4	43.4	38.1
Current Marijuana Use (2)	16.0	26.6	21.0
Lifetime Cocaine Use	1.7	5.6	3.5
Current Cocaine Use	1.2	3.8	2.4
Lifetime Inhalant Use	7.4	8.5	8.0
Current Inhalant Use	3.1	4.2	3.6
Lifetime Heroin Use	2.3	6.0	4.0
Lifetime Methamphetamine Use	2.7	6.5	4.5
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	2.9	6.1	4.4
Lifetime Injected Illegal Drug Use (3)	1.5	5.0	3.1

1. Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life

2. Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey

3. Used a needle to inject drugs

### **Trafficking and Seizures<sup>10</sup>**

- In November of 1999, deputies arrested 101 alleged street-level crack dealers and obtained warrants for another 78 near New Orleans. Agents from the FBI, DEA and

local police assisted the sheriff's office in their efforts. These arrests stemmed from the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's "Project STAR." Since Project STAR's inception in 1994, it has been able to make approximately 4,000 cases against alleged drug traffickers, involving the arrests of well over 1,500 suspects.

### Consequences of Use

- In 1998, there were 2,396 cocaine mentions in emergency departments (ED) in New Orleans.<sup>11</sup>

Estimated Number of ED Drug Mentions, by Drug Type, New Orleans, 1998

Cocaine	Heroin/ Morphine	Marijuana/ Hashish	Methamphetamine/ Speed
2,396	534	1,196	25

- The total number of drug-related deaths in New Orleans in 1998 was 191 this was up 9.8% from 174 in 1997.<sup>12</sup>

Drugs Mentioned in Drug-Related Deaths, New Orleans, 1998

Drug Type	Times Mentioned
Cocaine	78
Heroin/Morphine	62
Marijuana/Hashish	51
Methadone	7
Methamphetamine/Speed	--
PCP/PCP combinations	1
TOTAL DRUG MENTIONS	451

### Enforcement<sup>13</sup>

- Gulfcoast HIDTA Initiatives
  - New Orleans Gang Task Force: targets violent criminal groups involved in drug trafficking in New Orleans.
  - Asian Organized Crime Task Force: targets Asian gangs involved in drug distribution and related violent crime in the New Orleans area. This task force was a new initiative developed in FY99.
  - Project Star Task Force: focuses on gathering intelligence on high priority drug traffickers in the Jefferson Parish area by targeting one neighborhood at a time and identifying drug dealers for enforcement action. This task force works with the community to keep the neighborhood safe.
  - Major Investigations Team (MIT): targets major drug trafficking organizations operating in the greater New Orleans area.

### Courts<sup>14</sup>

- As of March 31, 2000, there were two drug courts in New Orleans that have been operating for over two years. At this time, there was also one drug court that had recently been implemented.

## Treatment<sup>15</sup>

- In 1997 there were 1,834 people admitted to treatment in New Orleans with cocaine as their primary drug of abuse.

### People Admitted to Treatment, by Drug of Choice, New Orleans, 1997

Type of Drug	Number	Percent
Amphetamine	27	<1
Cocaine	1,834	29
Hallucinogens	3	<1
Heroin	632	10
Inhalants	3	<1
Marijuana/Hashish	1,754	27
Non-Rx Methadone	19	<1
Other Opiates/synthetics	187	3
PCP	209	3

- 54% of those admitted to New Orleans treatment facilities in 1997 were black males.

### Race/Gender of Treatment Admissions, New Orleans, 1995-97

Race/Gender	1995		1996		1997	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Males</b>						
Black	3,799	53	2,979	49	3,400	54
White	1,645	23	1,311	21	1,132	18
<b>Females</b>						
Black	1,165	16	949	15	2,113	18
White	585	8	886	15	613	10

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

<sup>2</sup> City of New Orleans Web site: <http://www.new-orleans.la.us/>

<sup>3</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, HIDTA Web site:

<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta.html>

<sup>4</sup> Executive Office of Weed and Seed Web site: <http://www.weedseed.org>

<sup>5</sup> CEWG, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse*, January 1999: <http://www.cdmgroup.com/cewg>

<sup>6</sup> FBI, *Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report*, 1999, May 2000

<sup>7</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1999 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, July 2000: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/99adltfind.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> CEWG, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse*, January 1999: <http://www.cdmgroup.com/cewg>

<sup>9</sup> MMWR, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States*, 1997, August 1998:

<http://www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00054432.htm>

<sup>10</sup> On-line news article from APBNews: November 19, 1999: <http://www.apbnews.com>

<sup>11</sup> SAMHSA, *Year-End 1998 Emergency Department Data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network*, December 1999

<sup>12</sup> SAMHSA, *Drug Abuse Warning Network Annual Medical Examiner Data 1998*, March 2000

<sup>13</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, HIDTA Web site:

<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta.html>

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<sup>14</sup> OJP Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, March 31, 2000

<sup>15</sup> CEWG, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse*, January 1999: <http://www.cdmgroup.com/cewg>

This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues, contact:

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